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presents

MUSUME-IRI HAKO

Nisio Isin x Akatsuki Akira

Theme Box

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HE IS ALONE.
SHE IS ALSO ALONE.
UNPRECEDENTED PROJECT...! SPECIAL ONE-SHOT CENTER COLOR 28 PAGES!!
原作
西尾維新
漫画
暁月あきら
THE BEGINNING OF
A NEW CULT WORK THAT CONTINUES THE CHALLENGE! ALL 22 VOLUMES OF THE VERY POPULAR
ON SALE NOW!!

"DELINQUENTS SURE ARE SLY." "ALWAYS DOING WHATEVER THEY WANT."
"THEY THINK HIGHLY OF THEMSELVES JUST BECAUSE THEY DO SOMETHING GOOD EVERY NOW AND THEN."
ON BEHALF OF THOSE PEOPLE, I WANNA SAY ONE THING AS THE REPRESENTATIVE OF DELINQUENTS.
GOING OUT INTO THE CITY, AT THAT TIME...
"DELINQUENTS ARE ONLY CALLED DELINQUENTS BECAUSE THEY DON'T DO GOOD THINGS."
FOR EXAMPLE, ON A RAINY DAY LIKE TODAY,
EVEN IF I SAW AN ABANDONED CAT, I WOULDN'T PICK IT UP.
AND I WOULDN'T SAY ANYTHING LIKE, "ARE YOU LONELY, TOO?"
—BUT,

THERE ARE THINGS YOU SHOULDN'T THROW AWAY, RIGHT?!
AS A HUMAN BEING, THERE'S A LIMIT.
Please pick up

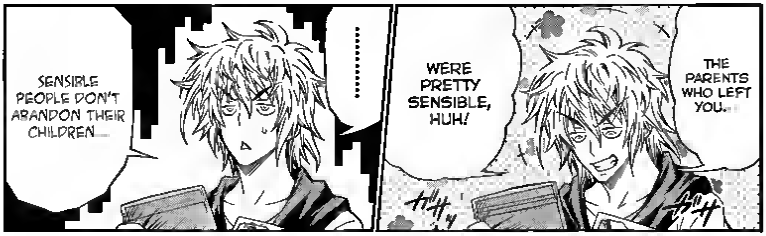
Plea

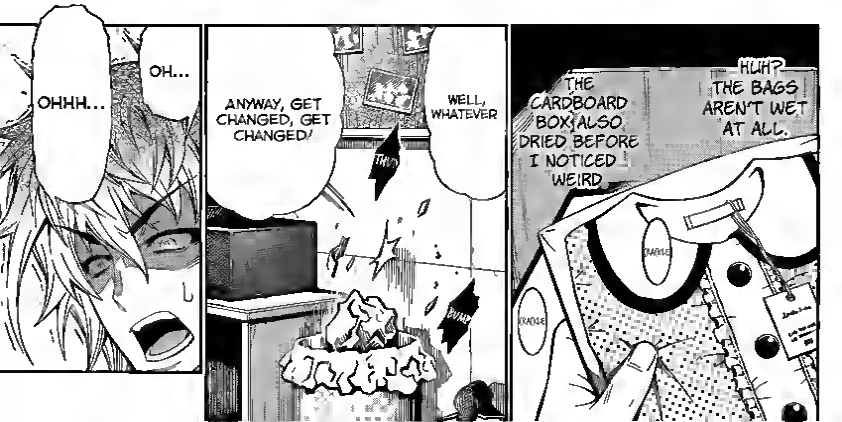
AH, JEEZ...
REALLY.
DRIPPING WET, AREN'T YA. CAN'T BE HELPED, I GUESS.
.....
ALRIGHT.
RUB
RUB
RUB

BUT BEFORE THAT, THESE CLOTHES WON'T DO...
DRIP
DRIP
ぷはぁっ
WITH THIS, YOUR HAIR'S PRETTY MUCH DRY.
WE'LL USE A HAIRDRYER LATER, TOO.
WHAT TO DO? SHOULD I HAVE HER WEAR ONE OF MY T-SHIRTS?
THAT SAID, THERE AIN'T ANYTHING LIKE KID'S CLOTHES IN MY PLACE.

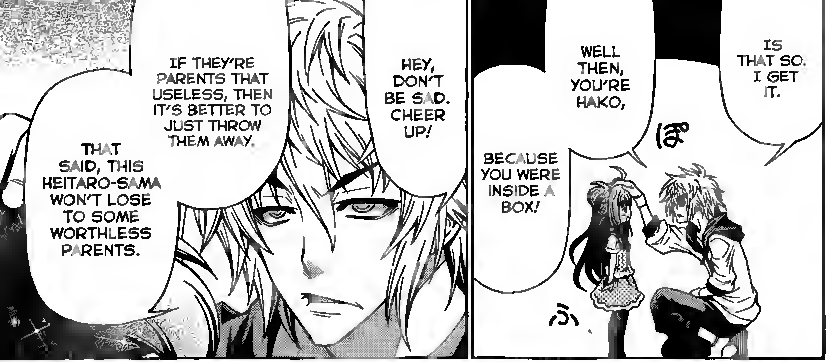
SOMETHING UP WITH THAT BOX YOU WERE IN?
HM? WHAT'S UP?
くい
くい

GUESS I DIDN'T LOOK CAREFULLY BEFORE, BUT THERE'S A CHANGE OF CLOTHES IN THE BOTTOM OF THE BOX
What's more it's brand new
HUH! DIDN'T NOTICE THIS EARLIER...
OH!
Please pick up

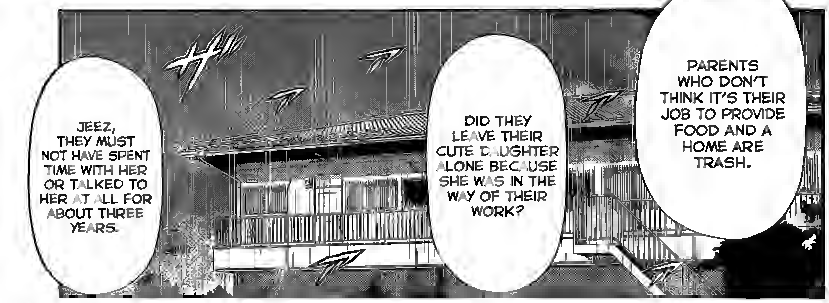

SENSIRLE PEOPLE DON'T ABANDON THEIR CHILDREN...
.....
WERE PRETTY SENSIBLE, HUH!
THE PARENTS WHO LEFT YOU.


OHHH...
OH...
ANYWAY, GET CHANGED, GET CHANGED!
WELL, WHATEVER
THE CARDBOARD BOX ALSO DRIED BEFORE I NOTICED WEIRD
HUH? THE BAGS AREN'T WET AT ALL.

MY NAME'S HEITAROU,
OOPS, SORRY FOR SAYING "YOU, YOU".
WHAT ABOUT YOU?
WELL, AREN'T YOU A PRETTY SIGHT!
WOW! LOOKS GOOD, LOOKS GOOD! I'M GLAD!
きゃらーん
AH, UMM...
NAME, YOUR NAME!
WHAT DID YOUR PARENTS CALL YOU?
UHH
AUH...
AH
UHHM...
.....
SHE DOESN'T KNOW HOW TO TALK?
THERE'S NO WAY SHE DIDN'T LEARN FROM HER PARENTS...


IF THEY'RE PARENTS THAT USELESS, THEN IT'S BETTER TO JUST THROW THEM AWAY.
HEY, DON'T BE SAD. CHEER UP!
THAT SAID, THIS HEITARO-SAMA WON'T LOSE TO SOME WORTHLESS PARENTS.
WELL THEN, YOU'RE HAKO,
IS THAT SO. I GET IT.
BECAUSE YOU WERE INSIDE A BOX!

*T/N. HAKO MEANS BOX.


JEEZ, THEY MUST NOT HAVE SPENT TIME WITH HER OR TALKED TO HER AT ALL FOR ABOUT THREE YEARS.
DID THEY LEAVE THEIR CUTE DAUGHTER ALONE BECAUSE SHE WAS IN THE WAY OF THEIR WORK?
PARENTS WHO DON'T THINK IT'S THEIR JOB TO PROVIDE FOOD AND A HOME ARE TRASH.

*T/N. THIS IS HER ATTEMPTING TO PRONOUNCE HIS NAME, HEITAROU

HEETARO.
AFTER THAT, LET'S GO TO THE POLICE TOGETHER.
DON'T WORRY.
I MAY LOOK LIKE THIS, BUT I HAVE A LOT OF INFLUENCE OVER THE POLICE.
In a bad way.
BIRDS OF A FEATHER FLOCK TOGETHER. I'LL AT LEAST LET YOU TAKE SHELTER FROM THE RAIN.
TAKE IT EASY UNTIL THE RAIN STOPS, HAKO!
IN SHORT, THIS IS A CASE OF "CHILDREN GROW UP EVEN WITHOUT PARENTS"

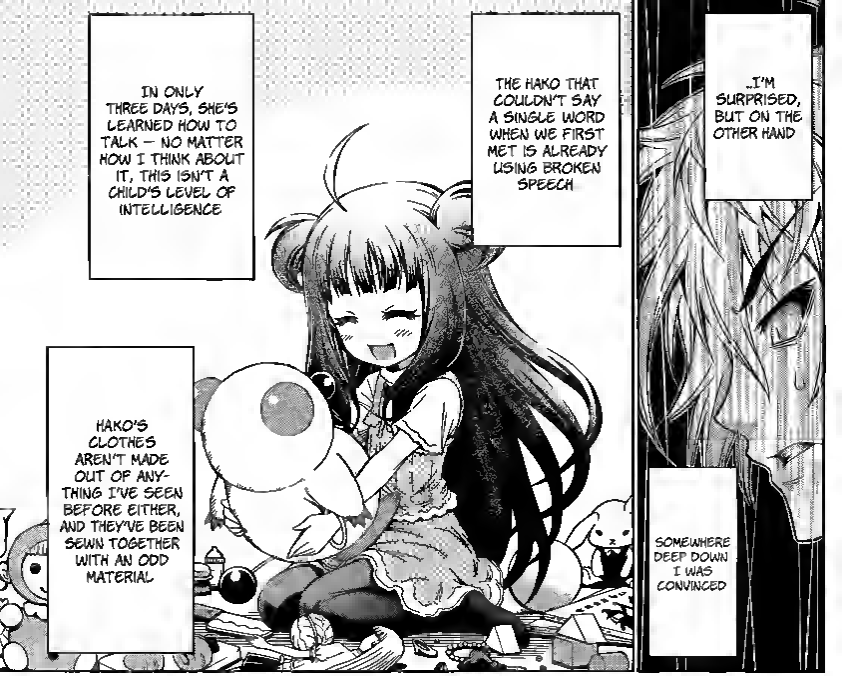
THE RAIN CONTINUED WITHOUT INTERRUPTION.
BUT FOR THREE DAYS AFTER THAT...
WHOA, WHAT'S GOING ON? EVEN THOUGH THERE'S NO TYPHOON AND IT'S NOT RAINY SEASON...
TODAY INCLUDED MAKES FOUR DAYS IN A ROW OF SEVERE RAIN WARNINGS.
EVEN THOUGH I'M THANKFUL FOR THE BREAK FROM SCHOOL
NOT BEING ABLE TO GO SHOPPING IS ANNOYING.
SOON THE REFRIGERATOR WILL BE EMPTY... AND I CAN'T LET THE BRAT GO HUNGRY.
HEY HAKO! I'M GONNA GO SHOPPING.
WATCH THE HOUSE FOR A BIT!
DON'T HAVE TO GO, HEETARO
HERE, FOOD HERE.

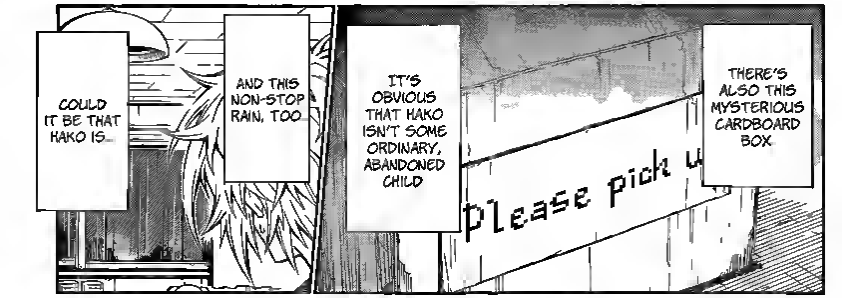
HEY, HEY... NO MISTAKING IT THIS TIME— THE BOX WAS DEFINITELY EMPTY UNTIL JUST NOW.
ALSO... THESE VEGETABLES LOOK LIKE THEY WERE FRESHLY HARVESTED...
pick up
FLYERS
ガッ
!!

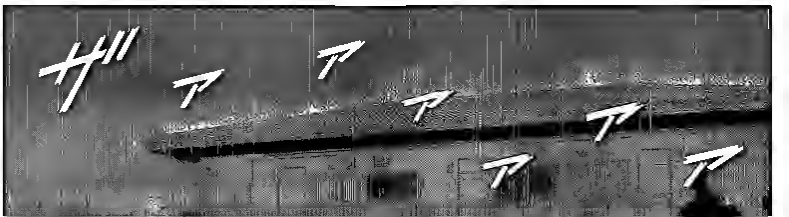
BOX GIVES.
WANTED THINGS
ANYTHING,
AS LONG IT'S OPENED.
!?

...ANY-THING, HUH. THAT'S...
BUT IF THAT'S ACTUALLY TRUE...
SO THE CLOTHES FROM EARLIER WERE ALSO...?
THIS AIN'T MAIL-ORDER...
HEETARO,
TO THE PERSON THAT PICKS IT UP,
AS THANKS!
WISH FOR ANYTHING
W-WELL THEN.
WATER...
WATER THEN! WE CAN'T DO WITHOUT DRINKS.

!!
PAJAMAS, TOO...
A FEW MORE CHANGES OF CLOTHES...
SILVERWARE FOR KIDS...
THE SAFE, PLASTIC KIND.
TH-THIS IS IMPOSSIBLE... A PICTURE BOOK!
THAT, AND BUILDING BLOCKS - THOSE KINDS OF TOYS...
...!! WHAT'S GOING ON WITH THIS THING?!!
AS LONG AS IT'S NOT BIGGER THAN THE BOX, ANYTHING WILL COME OUT..
IT'S LIKE A MAGIC TRICK... NO, ISN'T THIS SERIOUSLY JUST LIKE MAIL-ORDER?


...I'M SURPRISED, BUT ON THE OTHER HAND
THE HAKO THAT COULDN'T SAY A SINGLE WORD WHEN WE FIRST MET IS ALREADY USING BROKEN SPEECH
IN ONLY THREE DAYS, SHE'S LEARNED HOW TO TALK — NO MATTER HOW I THINK ABOUT IT, THIS ISN'T A CHILD'S LEVEL OF INTELLIGENCE
HAKO'S CLOTHES AREN'T MADE OUT OF ANY-THING I'VE SEEN BEFORE EITHER, AND THEY'VE BEEN SEWN TOGETHER WITH AN ODD MATERIAL
SOMEWHERE DEEP DOWN I WAS CONVINCED


THERE'S ALSO THIS MYSTERIOUS CARDBOARD BOX
IT'S OBVIOUS THAT HAKO ISN'T SOME ORDINARY, ABANDONED CHILD
AND THIS NON-STOP RAIN, TOO
COULD IT BE THAT HAKO IS...
Please pick u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HEETARO, WITH THIS, DON'T NEED TO GO OUT.
ALWAYS STAY
WITH HAKO.
!!
TUG
TUG
.....
AND THAT'S WHY...
HAKO IS JUST CALLED HAKO.
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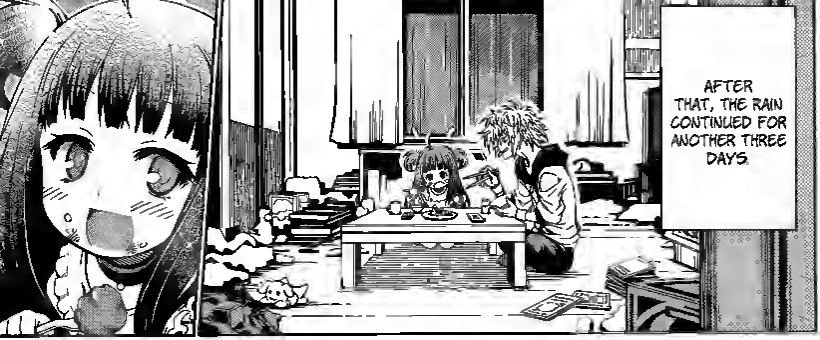
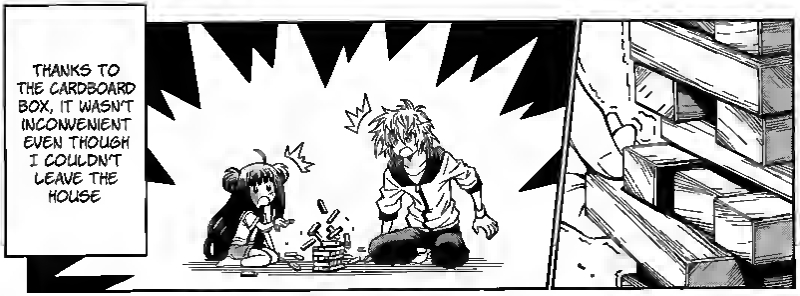
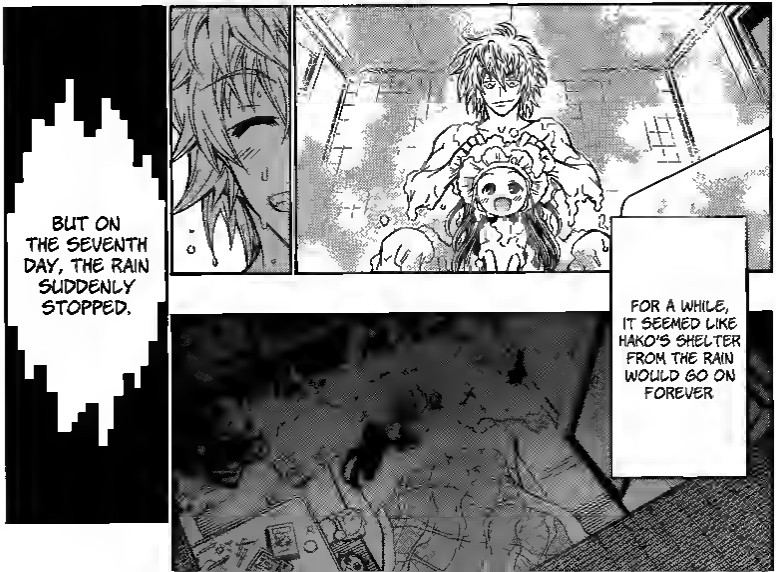
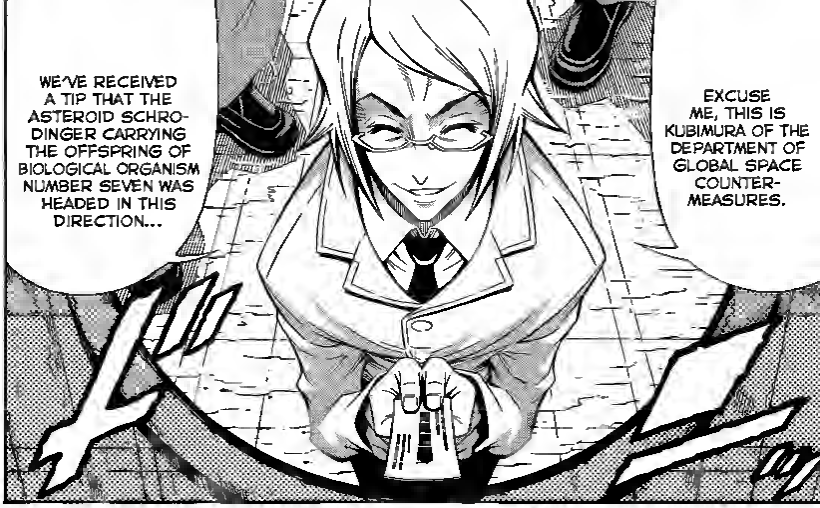
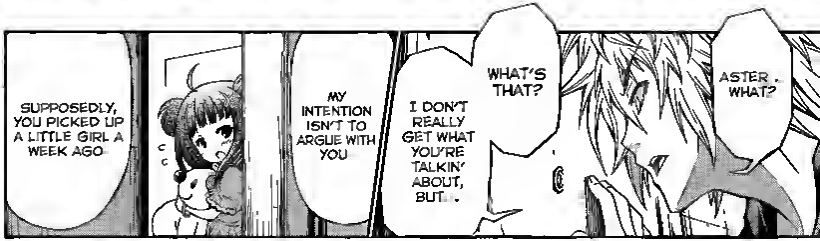
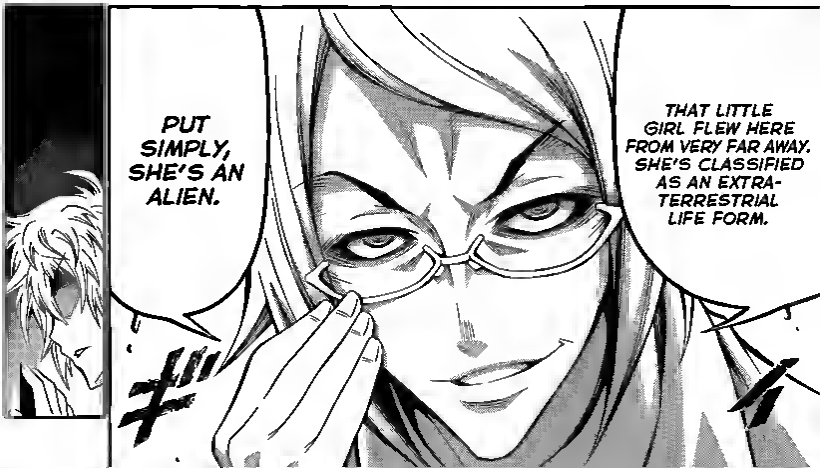

AFTER THAT, THE RAIN CONTINUED FOR ANOTHER THREE DAYS


THANKS TO THE CARDBOARD BOX, IT WASN'T INCONVENIENT EVEN THOUGH I COULDN'T LEAVE THE HOUSE

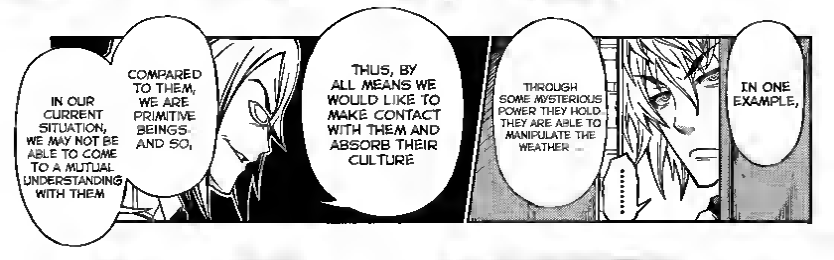

FOR A WHILE, IT SEEMED LIKE HAKO'S SHELTER FROM THE RAIN WOULD GO ON FOREVER
BUT ON THE SEVENTH DAY, THE RAIN SUDDENLY STOPPED.

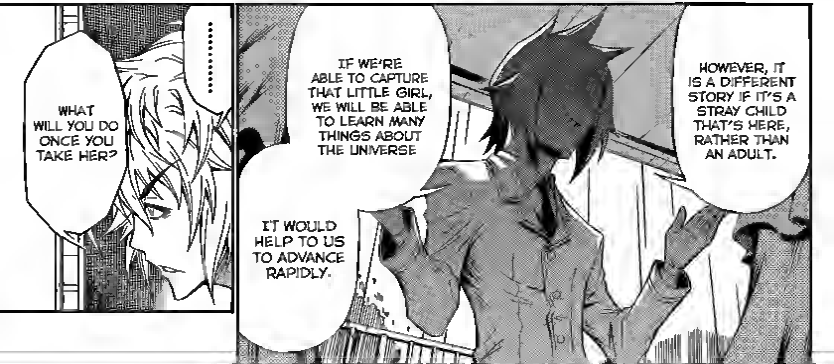

WE'VE RECEIVED A TIP THAT THE ASTEROID SCHRO-DINGER CARRYING THE OFFSPRING OF BIOLOGICAL ORGANISM NUMBER SEVEN WAS HEADED IN THIS DIRECTION...
EXCUSE ME, THIS IS KUBIMURA OF THE DEPARTMENT OF GLOBAL SPACE COUNTER-MEASURES.


SUPPOSEDLY, YOU PICKED UP A LITTLE GIRL A WEEK AGO.
MY INTENTION ISN'T TO ARGUE WITH YOU
I DON'T REALLY GET WHAT YOU'RE TALKIN' ABOUT, BUT...
WHAT'S THAT?
ASTER... WHAT?

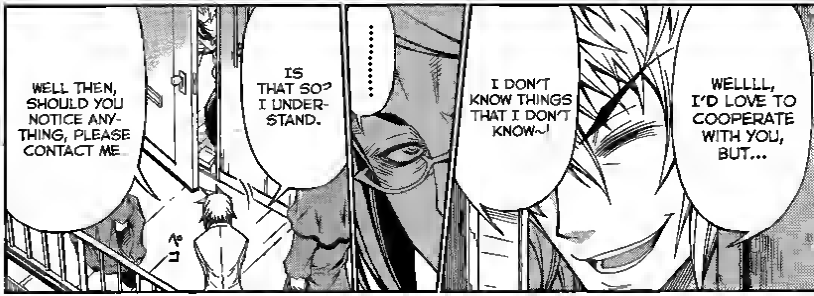

PUT SIMPLY, SHE'S AN ALIEN.
THAT LITTLE GIRL FLEW HERE FROM VERY FAR AWAY. SHE'S CLASSIFIED AS AN EXTRA-TERRESTRIAL LIFE FORM.

"ONE HUNDRED YEARS AGO, WE SUCCESSFULLY OBSERVED THAT BIOLOGICAL ORGANISM NUMBER SEVEN IS INHABITING THE ASTEROID SCHRODINGER, WHOSE COORDINATES WE'VE LOCATED TO BE IN THE TUNNEL GALAXY, IN A SO-CALLED 'CAT BOX'."
"THEY ARE A VERY INTELLIGENT SPECIES AND HAVE ATTAINED AN ADVANCED LEVEL OF TECHNOLOGY AND SCIENCE, THEY HAVE EXCELLENT GROWTH RATE AND LONG LIFE SPANS — IN ADDITION, THEY HAVE A MYSTERIOUS ECOLOGY."


IN ONE EXAMPLE,
THROUGH SOME MYSTERIOUS POWER THEY HOLD THEY ARE ABLE TO MANIPULATE THE WEATHER ...
.....
THUS, BY ALL MEANS WE WOULD LIKE TO MAKE CONTACT WITH THEM AND ABSORB THEIR CULTURE
COMPARED TO THEM, WE ARE PRIMITIVE BEINGS. AND SO,
IN OUR CURRENT SITUATION, WE MAY NOT BE ABLE TO COME TO A MUTUAL UNDERSTANDING WITH THEM


HOWEVER, IT IS A DIFFERENT STORY IF IT'S A STRAY CHILD THAT'S HERE, RATHER THAN AN ADULT.
IF WE'RE ABLE TO CAPTURE THAT LITTLE GIRL, WE WILL BE ABLE TO LEARN MANY THINGS ABOUT THE UNIVERSE
IT WOULD HELP TO US TO ADVANCE RAPIDLY.
.....
WHAT WILL YOU DO ONCE YOU TAKE HER?

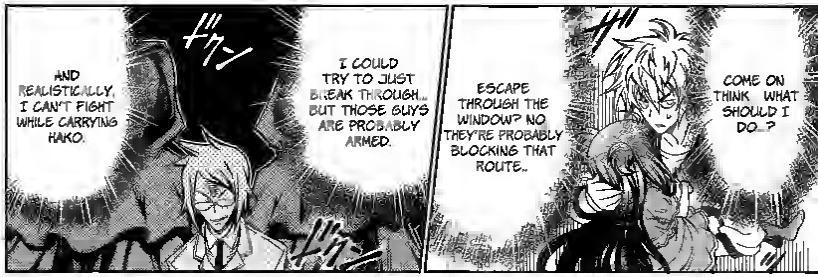
I PROMISE SHE WILL NOT BE HARMED.
PUSH
WELL, WE WON'T DO ANY BAD THINGS.
.....


WELL THEN, SHOULD YOU NOTICE ANY-THING, PLEASE CONTACT ME.
ペコ
IS THAT SO? I UNDER-STAND.
.....
I DON'T KNOW THINGS THAT I DON'T KNOW.
WELLLL, I'D LOVE TO COOPERATE WITH YOU, BUT...

SHOULD WE BREAK IN RIGHT AWAY?
NO, LET'S WAIT UNTIL WE GATHER MORE PEOPLE.
THE GIRL MAY BE A CHILD, BUT SHE SHOULD HAVE BEEN ENTRUSTED TO SOME SORT OF SECURITY FROM HER PARENTS.
CLICK

THE POLICE... MIGHT BE NO GOOD AFTER ALL. ANYWAY, LET'S GET FAR AWAY!!
HEY, HAKO, WE'RE RUNNING! GO GET READY!!
THEY WON'T LEAVE UNTIL THEY TAKE YOU!!
THOSE GUYS ARE SERIOUSLY DANGEROUS! MY INTUITION TELLS ME SO!
IDIOT. WHAT'RE YOU SAYING? I'M TELLING YOU IT'S DANGEROUS!
NO, I WON'T RUN.
.....
GOTCHA, THAT SOUNDS GOOD.
.....
IF I DO, SURELY, HEETARO WILL BE SAFE
I'LL GIVE MYSELF OVER
I DON'T WANT TO BOTHER HEETARO.
THAT'S WHY I WON'T GO!
DAN-GEROUS!

BUT...I'M A DELIN-QUENT.
I WON'T DO ANY GOOD THINGS, ANYWAY!
.....
HEE-TARO...


COME ON THINK WHAT SHOULD I DO...?
ESCAPE THROUGH THE WINDOW? NO THEY'RE PROBABLY BLOCKING THAT ROUTE..
I COULD TRY TO JUST BREAK THROUGH... BUT THOSE GUYS ARE PROBABLY ARMED.
AND REALISTICALLY, I CAN'T FIGHT WHILE CARRYING HAKO.

IF I ORDER SOME WEAPONS FROM THE CARDBOARD BOX, WOULD THAT HELP?
BUT IN THAT CASE... EVEN IF WE'RE ABLE TO RUN AWAY, THEN WHAT?
...HOLD ON. EARLIER THOSE GUYS SAID "SECURITY", RIGHT?
ENTRUSTED WITH SECURITY FROM HER PARENTS...
SOMETHING LIKE A CRIME PREVENTION BUZZER OR A CHILD CELL PHONE?

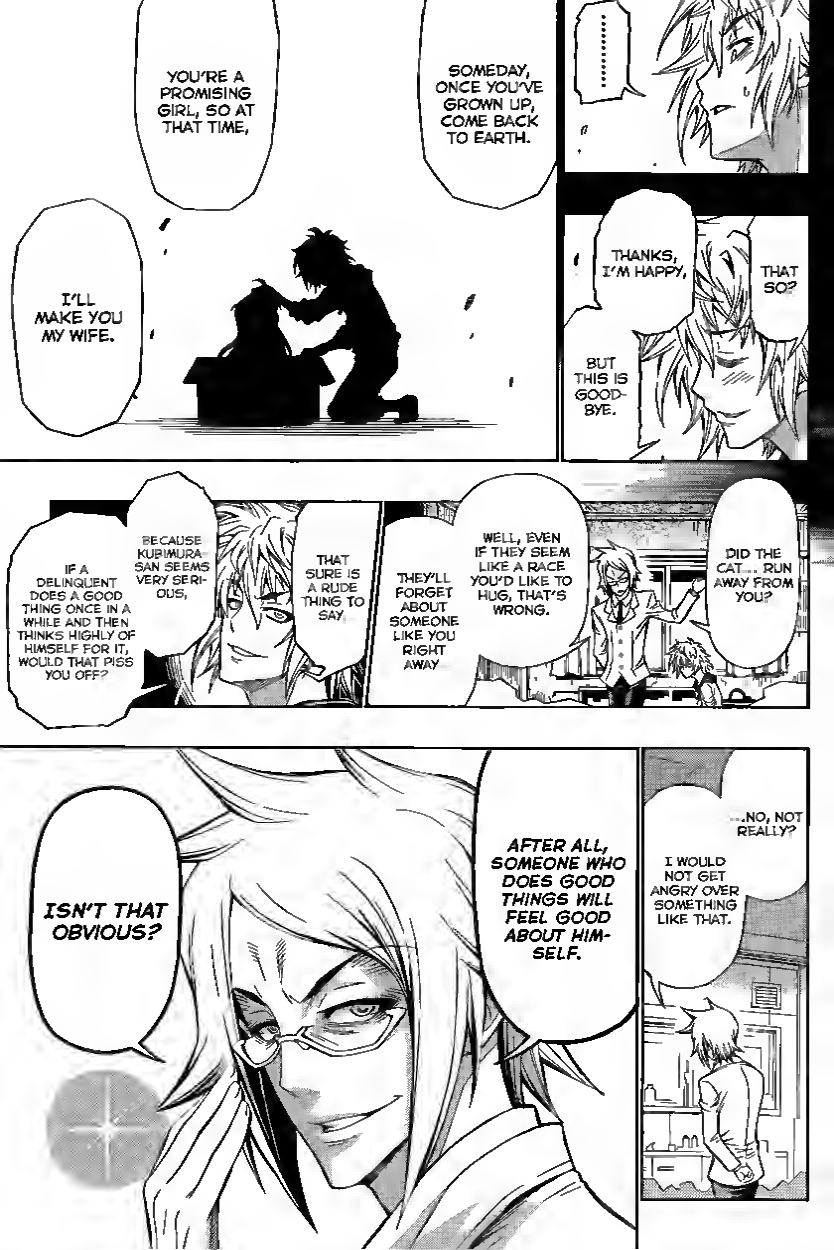
BREAK IN!
SIR!
SEARCH

KITCHEN HAS BEEN CLEARED, NOT PRESENT!!
THERE'S NOBODY IN THE BATH EITHER!!
SEARCH UNDER THE FUTON AS WELL, IT'S A SMALL CHILD!!
SHE'S NOT IN THE CLOSET!
HEITAROU-KUN
.....
WE'VE CLEARED ABOVE THE CEILING AND UNDERNEATH THE FLOOR!
ABSENT! ABSENT! SHE'S ABSENT!
WE CAN'T FIND HER, KUBIMURA-SAN!

BECAUSE I'M A DELINQUENT, Y'KNOW.
ON A RAINY DAY, I PICKED UP A KITTEN.
AHH... UMM Y'KNOW, IT'S THAT...
"PLEASE PICK UP"... IS WRITTEN ON IT.
WHAT IS THAT CARDBOARD BOX?
Please pick up

THERE'S ALREADY NO WHERE TO RUN AWAY TO.
NO! STOP IT, HEETARO!
SCARY! NO, NO!!
IT'S OKAY, HAKO WE EXPERIMENTED WITH THE CLOTHES EARLIER, RIGHT?
THIS BOX ISN'T JUST ABLE TO RECEIVE,
BUT IT CAN SEND, TOO.
AT FIRST, WHEN HAKO COULDN'T SPEAK, IT WAS BECAUSE SHE DIDN'T KNOW THIS PLANET'S LANGUAGE. IT WASN'T BECAUSE SHE WAS ABANDONED.
IF "PLEASE PICK UP" ACTUALLY MEANT "PLEASE DELIVER THE STRAY CHILD"...
THEN THERE SHOULD BE A MECHANISM THAT LETS ME SEND HER BACK TO HER PARENTS.
Please pick up
I'M SORRY FOR MISUNDERSTANDING AND BADMOUTHING YOUR PARENTS
OVER THERE, YOU SHOULD BE ABLE TO LIVE WELL.
NO!
I DON'T WANT TO GO BACK!
I WANT TO STAY WITH HEETARO!
I LIKE YOU!
LIKE YOU!
LIKE YOU!
ぽふ
...HAHA, WHAT'S WITH THAT.
DID I TEACH YOU A WORD LIKE THAT?

FALL IN LOVE WITH A GUY THAT'S GENUINELY GOOD
SOME-ONE THAT'S MORE HONEST, SERIOUS, AND VIRTUOUS...
BUT SOMETHING LIKE THAT IS JUST AN ILLUSION
TO AN INNOCENT CHILD LIKE HAKO, I GUESS I CAN SEEM LIKE A GOOD PERSON.
BUT THAT'S NO GOOD, LIKING SOMEONE LIKE ME.
YOU'RE WRONG!!
THAT'S SOMETHING ANY PERSON WOULD HAVE DONE...
WHAT, ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT THE DAY I PICKED YOU UP?
HEETARO IS A GOOD GUY
I HAVE!
HAKO DOESN'T WANT TO SEPARATE FROM HEE-TARO!!
I LIKE YOU!
I LIKE YOU!
THAT'S AMAZING! THERE HASN'T BEEN ANYONE LIKE THAT UP TILL NOW!!
THIS BOX CAN GIVE ANYTHING,
BUT HEETARO ONLY USED IT FOR HAKO'S SAKE!


SOMEDAY, ONCE YOU'VE GROWN UP, COME BACK TO EARTH.
YOU'RE A PROMISING GIRL, SO AT THAT TIME,
I'LL MAKE YOU MY WIFE.
.....
THANKS, I'M HAPPY,
THAT SO?
BUT THIS IS GOOD-BYE.
DID THE CAT... RUN AWAY FROM YOU?
WELL, EVEN IF THEY SEEM LIKE A RACE YOU'D LIKE TO HUG, THAT'S WRONG.
THEY'LL FORGET ABOUT SOMEONE LIKE YOU RIGHT AWAY
THAT SURE IS A RUDE THING TO SAY
BECAUSE KUBIMURA-SAN SEEMS VERY SERIOUS,
IF A DELINQUENT DOES A GOOD THING ONCE IN A WHILE AND THEN THINKS HIGHLY OF HIMSELF FOR IT, WOULD THAT PISS YOU OFF?
...NO, NOT REALLY?
I WOULD NOT GET ANGRY OVER SOMETHING LIKE THAT.
AFTER ALL, SOMEONE WHO DOES GOOD THINGS WILL FEEL GOOD ABOUT HIMSELF.
ISN'T THAT OBVIOUS?

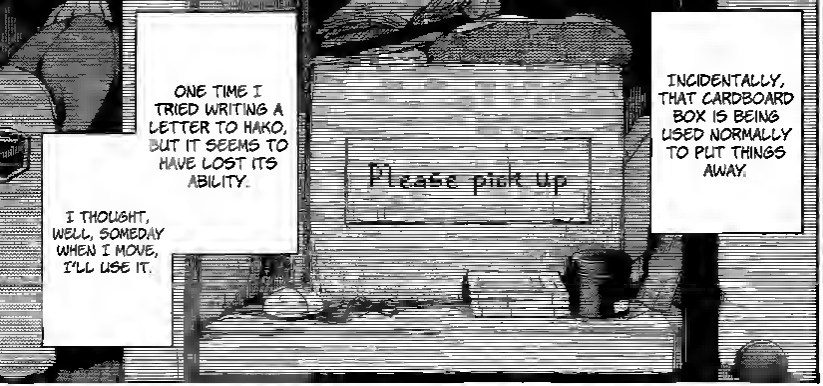
"WITHDRAW"
I THOUGHT HE'D BE ANGRIER, BUT AFTER SAYING THAT, KUBIMURA-SAN JUST LEFT
AFTER THAT, IT WAS JUST ME AND THE CARDBOARD BOX.
THE ROOM FELT WEIRDLY SPACIOUS.
Please pick up

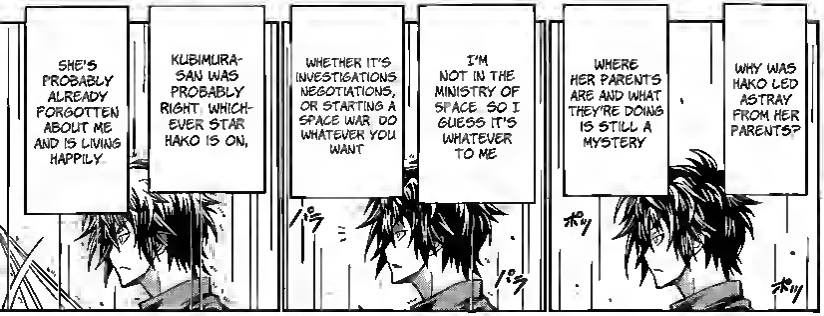
SO WITH THAT, THE STORY OF ME AND THE CHILD HAKO

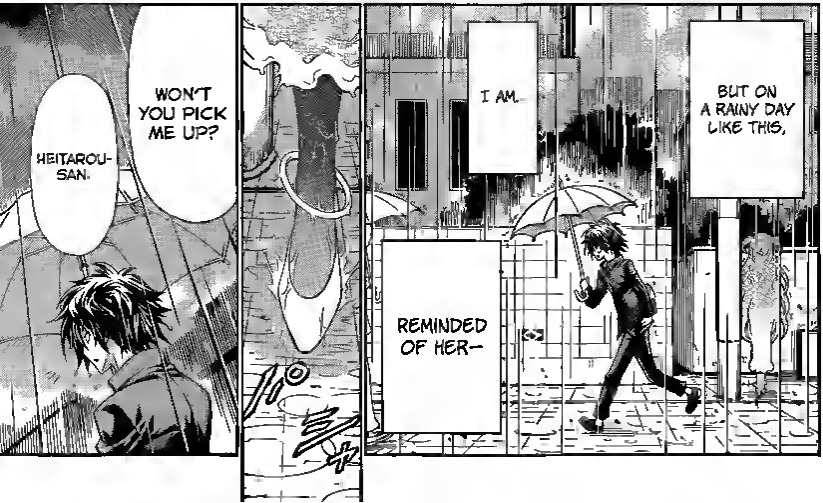
ENDED THERE.

I'D LIKE TO SAY "YAY" OR SOMETHING, BUT I WASN'T ESPECIALLY HAPPY.

THE ICING ON THE CAKE IS THAT ONE YEAR LATER,
I DYED MY HAIR BLACK AND I'M STUDYING FOR MY COLLEGE ENTRANCE EXAMS
BUT EVEN THOUGH I'VE TURNED OVER A NEW LEAF, IT'S NOT LIKE I'VE REFORMED MYSELF OR ANYTHING
IT'S JUST THAT, UNLESS I PRETEND TO BE A GOOD GUY,
HAKO WILL BECOME A WOMAN WITH A PAINFUL MISUNDER-STANDING.


ONE TIME I TRIED WRITING A LETTER TO HAKO, BUT IT SEEMS TO HAVE LOST ITS ABILITY.
I THOUGHT, WELL, SOMEDAY WHEN I MOVE, I'LL USE IT.
Please pick up
INCIDENTALLY, THAT CARDBOARD BOX IS BEING USED NORMALLY TO PUT THINGS AWAY.


SHE'S PROBABLY ALREADY FORGOTTEN ABOUT ME AND IS LIVING HAPPILY.
KUBIMURA-SAN WAS PROBABLY RIGHT. WHICH-EVER STAR HAKO IS ON,
WHETHER IT'S INVESTIGATIONS, NEGOTIATIONS, OR STARTING A SPACE WAR. DO WHATEVER YOU WANT
I'M NOT IN THE MINISTRY OF SPACE. SO I GUESS IT'S WHATEVER TO ME
WHERE HER PARENTS ARE AND WHAT THEY'RE DOING IS STILL A MYSTERY
WHY WAS HAKO LED ASTRAY FROM HER PARENTS?


WON'T YOU PICK ME UP?
HEITAROU-SAN.
I AM.
BUT ON A RAINY DAY LIKE THIS,
REMINDED OF HER—

PLEASE ALLOW ME TO TAKE SOME SHELTER FROM THE RAIN, HEITAROU-SAN
AND THIS TIME,
LET ME STAY EVEN AFTER THE RAIN ENDS.

WE'RE RECRUITING!!

JOIN US AT:

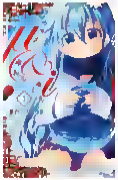
substitutescans.com & #substitutes@irc.irchighway.net!

Cleaner*

Redrawer

Rearawe

Redrawer
Translator**



Redrawer
Translator**

*experience needed

INTERNATIONAL SCANLATORS, PLEASE CONTACT US BEFORE USING OUR RELEASES!

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